



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/419,005	10/13/1999	JEFFREY M. STIBEL	SIK-101	9572

7590 04/01/2003

Anna M Vradenburgh
Brull Piccionelli Sarno Braun & Vradenburgh
1925 Century Park East
Suite 2350
Los Angeles, CA 90067

EXAMINER

HWANG, JOON H

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

2172

DATE MAILED: 04/01/2003

16

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

82

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/419,005

Applicant(s)

STIBEL, JEFFREY M.

Examiner

Joon H. Hwang

Art Unit

2172

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 September 2002.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13, 15-19 and 21-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 14 and 20 is/are ~~withdrawn from consideration~~ *Cancelled*.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13, 15-19 and 21-24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. The applicant amended claims 1, 10, 13, 15, 17, 19, and 20, canceled claims 14 and 20, and added new claims 21-24 in the amendment received on 9/24/02.

The pending claims are 1-13, 15-19, and 21-24.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

1. Claims 1, 5, 6, 10, 11, 15, 17, 18, and 21-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dharap (U.S. Patent No. 6,256,633) in view of Miller et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,926,811).

With respect to claim 1, Dharap discloses presenting an interface to a user for collecting a user search request keyword from the user (lines 18-27 in col. 3). Dharap discloses analyzing the user search request to identify at least one meaning associated with the user search request (lines 15-56 in col. 2, lines 42-67 in col. 3, and lines 1-7 in col. 4). Dharap discloses processing the user search request and at least one meaning to generate an expanded search request, which includes related terms that are not defined or chosen by the user, represented as a boolean search strategy (lines 28-67 in col. 3, lines 1-7 and 58-67 in col. 4, and lines 1-17 in col. 5). Dharap discloses providing the expanded search request to search engine capable of identifying information

Art Unit: 2172

associated with the expanded search request (lines 42-67 in col. 3 and lines 1-7 in col. 4). Dharap discloses a weighted topical dictionary (lines 8-32 in col. 4). Furthermore, Miller discloses a weighted term, which is associated with a concept or a meaning (lines 21-25 in col. 1, lines 7-13 in col. 2, lines 37-52 in col. 4, and lines 25-32 in col. 5) for ranking data of results. Therefore, based on Dharap in view of Miller, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to utilize a weight to a term associated with a meaning for ranking data of search results.

With respect to claim 5, Dharap discloses determining whether a plurality of meanings may be associated with the user search request (lines 15-42 in col. 2, lines 42-67 in col. 3, and lines 1-7 in col. 4).

With respect to claim 6, Dharap discloses matching a portion of the search request keyword to a linguistic database to identify a list of associated meanings (lines 42-67 in col. 3 and lines 1-32 in col. 4).

With respect to claim 10, Dharap discloses generating a user profile (a user linguistic database), which is separate from a dictionary/a thesaurus (the knowledgebase), containing keywords and associated user-defined meanings for the user (lines 15-42 in col. 2, lines 42-67 in col. 3, and lines 1-7 in col. 4).

With respect to claim 11, Dharap discloses accessing demographic information associated with the user for generating the expanded search request (lines 28-67 in col. 3, and lines 1-7 and 58-67 in col. 4, and lines 1-17 in col. 5).

With respect to claim 15, Dharap discloses a dictionary (a linguistic knowledgebase) having information representative of a list of sense signals describing a linguistic meaning and topically weighted (lines 42-67 in col. 3 and lines 1-32 in col. 4). Dharap discloses an interface to a user for collecting a user search request keyword from the user and accessing information from the dictionary (the linguistic knowledgebase) to generate an expanded search request (lines 18-67 in col. 3, lines 1-32 and 58-67 in col. 4, and lines 1-17 in col. 5). Dharap discloses processing the expanded search request to generate a boolean search request and providing the boolean search request to a search engine (lines 42-67 in col. 3 and lines 1-7 in col. 4). Dharap is silent on unweighted word in the list, weighting words in relation to a query term, and a set of boolean search requests to a set of search engines. However, Miller discloses weighting words in relation to a query term (abstract, lines 21-25 in col. 1, lines 7-13 in col. 2, lines 37-52 in col. 4, and lines 25-32 in col. 5) for ranking search results based on relevancy. Miller discloses filtering less relevant records, which are resulted based on words in the dictionary and query words. This less relevant records, records of 0 relevancy, teach unweighted words in the list. Miller discloses boolean search requests to search engines for the parallel processing (lines 30-35 in col. 2, lines 63-67 in col. 3, lines 1-37 in col. 4, lines 65-67 in col. 5, lines 1-12 in col. 6, fig. 5, and fig. 14). Therefore, based on Dharap in view of Miller, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to weight words in relation to a query term in order to rank search results based on relevancy.

The limitations of claim 17 are rejected in the analysis above of claim 10, and the claim is rejected on that basis.

The limitations of claim 18 are rejected in the analysis above of claim 11, and the claim is rejected on that basis.

With respect to claim 21, Dharap discloses a NOT operator in associated with a related term in the expanded search (lines 18-67 in col. 3 and lines 1-7 in col. 4).

With respect to claim 22, Miller further discloses the related terms weighted in accordance with the relevance of the related terms to the search request and the meaning (abstract, lines 21-25 in col. 1, lines 7-13 in col. 2, lines 37-52 in col. 4, and lines 25-32 in col. 5). Therefore, the limitations of claim 22 are rejected in the analysis above of claim 1, and the claim is rejected on that basis.

With respect to claim 23, Miller further discloses boolean search requests are formatted in accordance with the search engines (lines 30-35 in col. 2, lines 63-67 in col. 3, lines 1-37 in col. 4, lines 48-56 and 65-67 in col. 5, lines 1-12 in col. 6, fig. 5, fig. 13, and fig. 14). Therefore, the limitations of claim 23 are rejected in the analysis above of claim 15, and the claim is rejected on that basis.

With respect to claim 24, Dharap is silent on merging search results. However, Miller discloses merging the search results from a multiple sources of data and ranking the search results based on relevancy (lines 30-34 in col. 2 and lines 21-67 in col. 6). Therefore, based on Dharap in view of Miller, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to merge and rank search results for providing overall relevant search results in rank to the user.

2. Claims 2-4, 7-9, 12, 13, and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dharap (U.S. Patent No. 6,256,633) in view of Miller et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,926,811), and further in view of Ginsberg ("A unified approach to automatic indexing and information retrieval, IEEE, Oct. 1993, pages 46-56).

With respect to claim 2, Dharap and Miller are silent on providing a source of profile data representative of information. However, Ginsberg discloses a source of profile data representative of information (WorldLattice of Worldviews) that may be displayed to the user for guiding the user to supply information for refining the user search request (fig. 2 on page 48 and "Lattice-structured thesauri" section on pages 48-49). Therefore, based on Dharap in view of Miller, and further in view of Ginsberg, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to display a guidance of search by supplying information for the search assistance purpose to the user.

With respect to claims 3 and 4, Ginsberg further discloses category information capable of being selected by the user to identify a topic associated with the user search strategy (fig. 2 on page 48 and "Overview of WorldViews" section on pages 47-48). Ginsberg discloses subcategory information capable of being displayed to the user in response to the user selection of category and capable of providing information for refining the user search strategy (fig. 2 on page 48). Therefore, the limitations of claims 3 and 4 are rejected in the analysis above of claim 2, and these claims are rejected on that basis.

With respect to claim 7, Dharap and Miller are silent on displaying a plurality of meaning associated with the search request keyword to the user. However, Ginsberg discloses generating a display that presents to the user a plurality of meanings associated with the keyphrase to aid the user in disambiguating between the plural meanings ("Query interpretation" section on pages 53-54 and fig. 5 on page 54). Therefore, based on Dharap in view of Miller, and further in view of Ginsberg, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to display a plurality of meanings associated with the search request keyword for the search assistance purpose to the user.

With respect to claim 8, Dharap and Miller are silent on a menu of choices for meanings to the keyword. However, Ginsberg discloses generating a menu of choices that can be selected by the user to assign at least one of the associated meanings to the keyphrase (fig. 5 on page 54). Therefore, based on Dharap in view of Miller, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to utilize a menu of choices for meanings to the keyword for the search assistance purpose of the user.

With respect to claim 9, Dharap and Miller are silent on adjusting the user interface as a function of the associated meaning. However, Ginsberg discloses adjusting the user interface as a function of the associated meaning to present to the user a request (a request for selection) for information for refining the user search request (fig. 2 on page 48 and fig. 5 on page 54). Therefore, based on Dharap in view of Miller, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time

the invention was made to adjust the user interface as a function of the associated meaning in order to assist a user in searching.

With respect to claim 12, Dharap discloses accessing a dictionary (a linguistic knowledgebase) having information of a list of sense signals for describing a linguistic meaning and a list of words (lines 42-67 in col. 3 and lines 1-7 in col. 4). Ginsberg also discloses accessing a lattice-structured thesaurus (a linguistic knowledgebase) having information representative of a list of sense signals (broader term (BT), narrower term (NT), related term (RT), generalization, and word senses) and a list of words ("Properties of lattice-structured thesauri" section on pages 48-49, fig. 4 on page 53, and "Information retrieval" section on pages 53-56).

With respect to claim 13, Dharap discloses accessing the user profile (the user linguistic database) and identifying a sense signal associated with the keyword (lines 42-67 in col. 3 and lines 1-7 in col. 4).

With respect to claim 16, Dharap and Miller are silent on adjusting the user interface as a function of information accessed from the linguistic database. However, Ginsberg discloses adjusting the interface, as a function of information accessed from the linguistic database, for guiding the user in disambiguating between meanings for the keyphrase ("Query interpretation" section on pages 53-54, fig. 2 on page 48, and fig. 5 on page 54). Therefore, based on Dharap in view of Miller, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to adjust the user interface as a function of information accessed from the linguistic database in order to assist a user in searching.

3. Claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dharap (U.S. Patent No. 6,256,633) in view of Miller et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,926,811), and further in view of Ryan et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,421,675).

With respect to claim 19, Dharap and Miller disclose the claimed subject matter as discussed above. Further, Miller discloses a signal, which can be other forms of the signal, for the indication purpose (lines 7-24 in col. 5). Dharap and Miller are silent on controlling a condition of use of words in the generation of the expanded search request. However, Ryan discloses a keyword eliminator feature that controls a condition of use of words in a query generation for the parental control of children use (lines 41-61 in col. 25 and fig. 15). Therefore, based on Dharap in view of Miller, and further in view of Ryan, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to control a condition of use of words in a query generation in order to prevent the use of the words for the parental control.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1 and 15 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

5. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP

§ 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).


A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Joon H. Hwang whose telephone number is 703-305-6469. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:30-6:00(M-F).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kim Y Vu can be reached on 703-305-4393. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-746-7239 for regular communications and 703-746-7238 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-3900.

Joon Hwang
March 21, 2003


KIM VU
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100